

Iowa Health and Wellness Strategies Consortium

Goal: To contain costs, provide quality health care services, and reduce disparities by creating a wellness coalition whose members would agree upon common principles that would guide and influence supply and demand for health care services in Iowa.

I. Background:

As health care costs continue to escalate, incentives and education need to drive individual responsibility for use of health care services and lifestyle choices that improve health while containing costs. A health and wellness strategies consortium would serve as a catalyst to advance voluntarily adopted strategies to improve quality of care, avail services, and contain costs if legislation did not support mandates related to health care coverage.

II. Commission Proposal #1– Create the Iowa Health and Wellness Strategies Consortium.

The Iowa Legislature will establish and fund for one year an Iowa Health and Wellness Strategies Consortium to discuss, endorse and implement best practice models within Iowa's health care system.

The Iowa Legislature will charge the Iowa Health and Wellness Strategies Consortium to agree upon common principles that will guide and influence supply and demand for health care services in Iowa with the goals of providing quality health care services, increasing access, reducing disparities and containing costs while emphasizing population health and wellness.

The Iowa Legislature will partially fund the Iowa Health and Wellness Strategies Consortium during the second year. The consortium will be partially funded by membership dues, in-kind contribution and grants during the second year and fully funded by membership dues, in-kind contributions and grants thereafter.

The Iowa Legislature will determine core membership for the Iowa Health and Strategies Wellness Consortium during the first two years. The Consortium will determine expanded membership and dues structure during the first year. Core members of the Consortium will include representatives from purchasers, payers, and providers of health care, including, but not limited to representatives from Medicaid, state employee health benefit, the Iowa Health Buyers Alliance, Wellmark, Principal, small businesses, and labor unions.

III. Commission Proposal #2 – Endorse Health and Wellness Strategies.

The Iowa Legislature will oversee the Iowa Health and Wellness Strategies Consortium during the first year through biannual progress reports. The Consortium will focus their discussion and activities on three key issues.

1. Implement initiatives that promote wellness
2. Endorse and promote adoption of strategies to contain health care costs
3. Increase the public's role and responsibility in their healthcare choices and decisions.

The Consortium should direct the following strategies for health care payers and purchasers to promote or adopt.

1. Initiatives that promote wellness
 - Provide smoking cessation program in a standard benefit including reimbursement for treatment and support services.
 - Increase immunization rates for pneumococcal and influenza. Approve administration fee for all qualified providers of flu and pneumococcal vaccinations.
 - Provide incentives (i.e., reduced physician office co-pay) to members participating in wellness programs.
2. Endorse and promote adoption of strategies to contain health care costs
 - Promote adoption of health information technology through provider incentives
 - Consider four-tier prescription drug co-payment system within prescription drug benefit that includes a zero co-pay tier for select medications to improve patient compliance
 - Provide a standard medication therapy management program with prescription drug benefit to optimize high-risk patient's medication outcomes.
 - Investigate whether pooled purchasing for a prescription drug benefit (common statewide preferred drug list) would decrease costs.
3. Increase the public's role and responsibility in their health care choices and decisions.
 - Create public awareness campaign to educate consumers on smart health care choices and promoting value based purchasing.
 - Promote public reporting of quality and performance measures that support a value-based purchasing system

Addendum:

On 12/13/07 a teleconference was held and the following addendum was developed.

A pilot using the recommendations outlined above in a population with state funded health benefits might be another implementation strategy. The Iowa General Assembly would have greater authority over the employees of state government, Medicaid recipients, and possible other governmental employees such as those who are employed by the regents' institutions. These groups represent a significant number of Iowans and a possible strategy is to start with implementation of these recommendations with all or part of these groups.